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ART. IX. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *The Metres of the Greeks and Romans. A Manual for Schools and Private Study*. Translated from the German of EDWARD MUNK. By CHARLES BECK and C. C. FELTON, Professors in Harvard University. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1844. 12mo. pp. 349.

THE object of the learned translators of this work was, to furnish a general book of reference respecting the Greek and Roman metres, to accompany the text-books used in colleges for teaching the ancient languages. Instead of preparing an original treatise, they deemed it better to have recourse to the great German storehouse of classical learning, to select from it the most approved manual for their purpose, and to give a faithful version of it into English for the use of scholars in this country and in England. They have accomplished this task with the good taste, sound judgment, and general knowledge of the subject, which one was prepared to expect from their high reputation as instructors, and from the merits of their former publications, in which they have done so much for the progress of classical studies in the United States. The work of Dr. Munk is succinct, accurate, and thorough, and it is rendered into English with great precision, and with as much perspicuity as was possible, considering the abstruse and rugged character of the terminology, which must be acquired before we can have definite notions of the metrical systems of the ancients. We ought not to complain of the rather formidable appearance of this technical phraseology, if the study of the metres is actually simplified by its use, and the meaning given with more precision and brevity than would be possible, if the uncouth terms were avoided by the adoption of a loose and extended paraphrase, instead of a literal translation. In some cases, however, we conceive that the translators might have got rid of very awkward terms and compounds by adopting perfectly equivalent expressions in familiar English. Thus, we see no necessity for writing "iambographers" instead of "writers of iambs," or for making any use of such barbarous compounds as "eurhythmy" and "arrhythmy." By not taking sufficient account of the radical difference between the German and English languages, in regard to the license of introducing foreign words and novel compounds, translators are very apt to make such mistakes, and thereby to injure the purity and individuality of the mother tongue. The pedantry of many German scholars,

also, fostered by this flexibility of their language, often leads them to enlarge the nomenclature of a particular science to an unnecessary, and even a ridiculous, extent.

It is difficult to give any account of the contents of this work, which shall obviate the necessity of examining the book itself, before the student can tell whether it will answer his purpose. A brief introduction contains a list of the principal works on the metrical science of the Greeks and Romans, which will be very serviceable to those who wish to study the subject in its widest latitude. The first part relates to the doctrine of rhythm, and gives the necessary definitions, and those general views of the topics to be explained which it is necessary to master before we enter upon the study of the details. The introduction to the second part contains a brief survey of the history of Greek and Roman poetry, with particular reference to the metres employed. This is followed by the body of the work, containing a detailed explanation of the various modes in which the laws of rhythm were applied to poetry by the ancients. The different kinds of verse are taken up in a natural order, and their structure is explained with great clearness and precision, and illustrated by numerous examples. The theory of metre here adopted agrees in every essential respect with that of Böckh, which Dr. Munk prefers to the system of Hermann, because the latter is made unnecessarily obscure, through the writer's attachment to the philosophical views and language of Kant. Certainly, the subject is abstruse enough in itself, without being darkened by the Egyptian gloom which fills every recess of the "Critical Philosophy."

The typographical execution of the book is very neat, and as great pains have been taken with the correction of the proofs, we may presume that it is quite free from errors. A copy of it ought to be in the hands of every classical teacher and pupil, as an indispensable auxiliary to his grammar and dictionary, in enabling him to acquire clear views of the form and internal arrangement of ancient poetry.

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2. — *Observations in Europe, principally in France and Great Britain*. By JOHN P. DURBIN, D. D., President of Dickinson College. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1844. 2 vols. 12mo.

It is no easy thing, in this age, to write a book of travels in Europe, that shall have any thing of originality or interest. All the prominent objects, whether of nature or of art, have been